

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are pending. Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 12, and 15 are amended by the present amendment. As amended Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 12, and 15 are supported by the original disclosure,<sup>1</sup> no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 6, 12, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101; Claims 1-5, 8, and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Agraharam et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,482, hereinafter Agraharam) in view of Porter et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,675,299, hereinafter Porter); and Claims 6, 7, 9-11, and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Agraharam in view of Porter and further in view of Erdelyi et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20040056879, hereinafter Erdelyi).

With regard to the rejection of Claims 1, 6, 12, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §101, it is respectfully noted that Claims 1, 6, 12, and 15 all recite apparatuses that include multiple structural elements. The assertion in the outstanding Office Action that all of the elements of these claims are “considered as a program per se” is completely unsupported, and clearly incorrect. For example, the “communication means for transmitting the data” recited in Claim 1 is clearly a structural element, not “a program per se.” Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1, 6, 12, and 15 are in compliance with all requirements under 35 U.S.C. §101.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 1-5, 8, and 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Agraharam in view of Porter, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g. the specification at page 17, line 19 to page 18, line 10 and Figures 6 and 9.

Amended Claim 1 recites in part:

means for transmitting a list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group to each of the information processing apparatuses in the same group.

Agraharam describes a system where a “conductor” at conductor session terminal 201 selects the client terminals 103 and 104 that will receive selected documents by including these terminals on a participation list PL.<sup>2</sup> However, it is respectfully submitted that Agraharam does not teach or suggest that the participation list is sent to any of terminals 103 and 104. Thus, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “means for transmitting” as defined in amended Claim 1.

Porter describes a document management system that *prevents* multiple users from accessing a document at the same time.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Porter clearly does not include “means for transmitting” as defined in amended Claim 1. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 (and Claims 2 and 3 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Agraharam in view of Porter.

Independent Claims 5 and 12 recite similar elements to Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 5 and 12 (and Claims 13 and 14 dependent therefrom) are patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1.

Amended Claim 4 recites in part:

a transmission step of transmitting a list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group to each of the information processing apparatuses in the same group.

As noted above, Agraharam describes a system where a participation list is maintained by a server, but the participation list is *not* sent to any of terminals 103 and 104.

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<sup>2</sup>See Agraharam, paragraph 27.

<sup>3</sup>See Porter, column 9, lines 19-31.

Thus, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “transmitting a list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group to each of the information processing apparatuses in the same group” as recited in amended Claim 4. As Porter does not cure the above noted deficiencies of Agraharam, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 4 is patentable over Agraharam in view of Porter.

Amended Claim 8 recites in part:

a reception step of receiving data transmitted from the single shared server of the service providing apparatus to all of the information processing apparatuses belonging to the same group, the data including a list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group to each of the information processing apparatuses in the same group;

a display step of displaying the list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group.

As Agraharam describes a system where the participation list is not sent to any of terminals 103 and 104, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “a reception step” as recited in amended Claim 8. Further, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “a display step” as recited in amended Claim 8 either. As Porter does not cure the above noted deficiencies of Agraharam, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 8 is also patentable over Agraharam in view of Porter.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 6, 9, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Agraharam in view of Porter and further in view of Erdelyi, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 6 recites in part:

reception means for receiving data transmitted from the service providing apparatus to all of the information processing apparatuses belonging to the same group, *the data including a list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group to each of the information processing apparatuses in the same group*;

display means for displaying the list of all of the information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group.

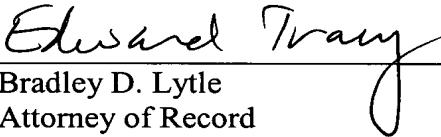
As Agraharam describes a system where the participation list is not sent to any of terminals 103 and 104, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “reception means” as recited in amended Claim 6. Further, Agraharam does not teach or suggest “display means” as recited in amended Claim 6 either. Erdelyi describes a system for displaying video data to a *single* user. Thus, as Erdelyi does not describe a list of any information processing apparatuses currently accessing the shared server and belonging to the same group, it is respectfully submitted that Erdelyi cannot teach or suggest “reception means” or “display means” as recited in amended Claim 6. As Porter does not cure the above noted deficiencies of Agraharam, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 6 (and Claims 7 and 11 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Agraharam in view of Porter and further in view of Erdelyi.

Independent Claims 9 and 15 recite similar elements to Claim 6. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 9 and 15 (and Claims 10, 16, and 17 dependent therefrom) are patentable over Agraharam in view of Porter and further in view of Erdelyi for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 6.

Consequently, in light of the foregoing comments and present amendment, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-17 patentably defines over the asserted references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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